

## CONGRESSMAN DAVIS TO TESTIFY IN SENATOR DURBIN'S PRISON PIPELINE HEARING

WASHINGTON, DC (DECEMBER 12, 2012) - Statement of Rep. Danny K. Davis on Policies to End the School-to-Prison Pipeline before Landmark Senate Judiciary Hearing Hosted by Senator Richard Durbin

Today, Congressmen Danny K. Davis (D-IL) will testify during the hearing on ending the school-to-prison pipeline before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights. Subcommittee Chairman and Assistant Majority Leader for the Senate, Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) is holding the ground-breaking Congressional hearing into the problem of and potential remedies for the systematic meting of overly-harsh discipline practices within educational settings.

Congressman Davis said, "Given that minority men disproportionately experience exclusionary discipline, I have advocated vigorously for over a decade that the federal government should lead the effort to address the over-disciplining of youth, a key factor involved in the educational crisis of African American men. I applaud Senator Durbin for his leadership in raising one of the most profound, most pernicious, and most complex issues of our day - the mass incarceration of our people to the extent that we have become the most imprisoned nation on the face of the earth. This landmark hearing will raise the level of awareness of the problem of the school-to-prison pipeline and advance policies to address it."

Congressman Davis added, "I am very honored to testify about actions that I believe are critical to improving the safety and effectiveness of school discipline based on my tenure in Congress and my work as Chair of the Education and Labor Taskforce of the Congressional Black Caucus. In my testimony, I will highlight the need to view discipline as an indicator for identifying struggling schools and for directing supports to them. To do this, we must first collect and examine discipline data, both for compliance with civil rights laws and prior to civil rights violations. For this reason, we must promote school-wide, evidenced-based disciplinary systems. I am proud to champion the Positive Behavior for Safe and Effective Schools Act, which would direct federal funding to support positive behavior interventions. Research demonstrates that these programs improve school climate, academic performance, and student attendance as well as to reduce discipline referrals, suspensions, expulsions and out-of-class time due to discipline referrals. Given that minority men disproportionately experience exclusionary discipline, we cannot truly understand push out or the success of interventions without examining discipline data by the interaction of gender and race/ethnicity. I look forward to participating in this landmark hearing to advance efforts to eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline."